

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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SUBJECT: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DISCUSSES EC RELATIONS WITH GREECE

REF: EC BRUSSELS 3127

1. SUMMARY. AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE SOCIALISTS, ON DECEMBER 12 THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT HELD AN EMERGENCY DEBATE ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN GREECE AND RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND THE EC. THE SOCIALISTS DEMANDED THE ABROGATION OF THE EC-GREECE/ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT. SPEAKING FOR THE EC COMMISSION, SOAMES REJECTED THIS AND SAID THE PRESENT FREEZE IN EC-GREEK RELATIONS WOULD CONTINUE. END SUMMARY.

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2. AT THE END OF QUESTION TIME DURING THE DECEMBER SESSION OF

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN STRASBOURG, EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SOAMES RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY TWO SOCIALISTS AND A COMMUNIST MEMBER ON EC RELATIONS WITH GREECE. HE RECALLED THE STATEMENTS HE MADE IN MARCH AND JUNE (REFTEL) THAT ALL VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ARE ABHORRENT TO THE COMMISSION AND THAT THERE IS NO QUESTION OF FURTHER PROGRESS IN EC RELATIONS WITH GREECE AT THIS TIME. SOAMES REVEALED THAT HE HAD SEEN THE GREEK AMBASSADOR TO THE EC RECENTLY AND TOLD HIM THERE COULD BE NO MOVEMENT IN THE EC'S ASSOCIATION RELATIONS WITH GREECE UNTIL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS WERE RE-ESTABLISHED THERE. HE INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT THE COMMISSION REMAINS FULLY COMMITTED TO THE GOAL OF EVENTUAL GREEK MEMBERSHIP IN THE EC. HE SAID RELATIONS WITH GREECE SHOULD REMAIN "FROZEN" ALTHOUGH THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT SHOULD NOT BE SUSPENDED.

3. SAYING THE SOCIALISTS WERE DISSATISFIED WITH SOAMES'S RESPONSE, SOCIALIST GROUP LEADER VALS OF FRANCE ASKED FOR IMMEDIATE DEBATE OF THE SUBJECT BY THE PARLIAMENT. DURING THE ENSUING DEBATE MOST SPEAKERS WERE SOCIALIST OR COMMUNIST MEMBERS. THEY CRITICIZED THE COMMISSION FOR PROCEEDING WITH THE NOVEMBER MEETING OF THE EC-GREECE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL AND THE ABROGATION OF THE TREATY OF ATHENS WHICH ESTABLISHED THE EC-GREECE ASSOCIATION IN 1961. IN A BRIEF STATEMENT, CONSERVATIVE GROUP LEADER KIRK OF THE UK SAID THAT WHILE HE SHARED THE SOCIALIST CONCERN THAT "ONE GROUP OF SOLDIERS OVERTHREW ANOTHER," HE DID NOT SHARE THEIR CRITICISM OF THE COMMISSION'S POSITION.

4. SPEAKING AGAIN, SOAMES SAID IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE PARLIAMENT DEPLORES THAT THERE ARE TOO MANY AREAS OF THE WORLD WHERE DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT GIVEN FULL EMPHASIS. THE COMMISSION SHARES THIS VIEW AND IS PARTICULARLY SAD ABOUT GREECE BECAUSE OF THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE COMMUNITY HAD LOOKED FORWARD TO THE FRUITION OF THAT ASSOCIATION. THIS WAS NOT TO BE AND THE COMMISSION HAD DECIDED IN 1967 TO FREEZE RELATIONS WITH GREECE. THIS DECISION HAD BEEN REAFFIRMED SEVERAL TIMES BY THE COUNCIL. HE SAID THE RECENT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF ASSOCIATION WAS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE EC COUNCIL AND CONCERNED ITSELF WITH TRADE RELATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS ON WHICH CONSULTATION IS REQUIRED BY THE TREATY OF ATHENS.

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5. SOAMES CONTINUED THAT THE PRESENT QUESTION IS WHETHER THE COMMUNITY SHOULD GO FURTHER THAN THE PRESENT FREEZE IN ITS RELATIONS WITH GREECE. HE SAID THE COMMUNITY SHOULD REFLECT DEEPLY AND HE FELT IT WOULD NOT BEHOOVE THE EC, WHOSE ENTIRE STRUCTURE IS BASED ON LEGALITY, TO ABROGATE A LEGAL TREATY WHEN IT SEES FIT TO DO SO SIMPLY BECAUSE IT DOES NOT LIKE THIS OR THAT, NO MATTER HOW SERIOUS IT MAY VIEW A PARTICULAR SITUATION.

HE SAID ALL THE COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS LOOK FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN THEIR DESIRE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASSOCIATION IS ACHIEVED AND GREECE CAN TAKE ITS PLACE AMONG THE MEMBER STATES. HE CONCLUDED THAT UNTIL THERE IS A TRANSFORMATION REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS IN GREECE, THE COMMUNITY CAN GO NO FURTHER THAN ITS PRESENT STANDSTILL.

6. NO RESOLUTION WAS TABLED FOLLOWING THE DEBATE AND THEREFORE NO VOTE WAS TAKEN. DURING THE DEBATE THERE WAS NO MENTION OF THE US, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE OCCASIONAL REFERENCES TO GREEK MEMBERSHIP IN NATO. BARBIS

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